AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1 and 6 as follows.

1. (currently amended) A fuel cell comprising:

a fuel cell unit including an anode electrode, a cathode electrode, and an electrolyte interposed between said anode electrode and said cathode electrode; and

separators for supporting said fuel cell unit interposed therebetween, said fuel cell further including:

communication holes forming a manifold penetrating through said separator, ~~for~~said manifold allowing a fuel gas or an oxygen-containing gas to flow therethrough;

at least one gas flow passage provided on an electrode power-generating surface of said separator, for supplying said fuel gas or said oxygen-containing gas to said anode electrode or said cathode electrode; and

at least one connecting flow passage penetrating through said separator, said connecting flow passage being different than said manifold, said connecting flow passage connecting said communication hole on a surface opposite to said electrode power-generating surface and said gas flow passage on said electrode power-generating surface,

wherein said separator has a buffer on at least one of an inlet side and an outlet side of said gas flow passage, and said buffer is connected to said connecting flow passage.

2. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 1, wherein said connecting flow passage includes

flow passage grooves connected to said communication hole on said surface opposite to said electrode power-generating surface; and

through-holes penetrating through said separator, said through-holes connecting said flow passage grooves and said gas flow passage.

3. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 1, wherein said fuel cell has a rectangular shape, and said communication holes are provided at upper, central, and lower portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell.

4. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 3, wherein said gas flow passage is a

serpentine passage;

said communication holes provided at said upper portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell are a fuel gas inlet and a fuel gas outlet, and said communication holes provided at said lower portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell are an oxygen-containing gas inlet and an oxygen-containing gas outlet; and

said fuel gas inlet and said fuel gas outlet are provided at diagonally opposite positions, and said oxygen-containing gas inlet and said oxygen-containing gas outlet are provided at diagonally opposite positions.

5. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 4, wherein said communication holes provided at said central portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell are a cooling medium inlet and a cooling medium outlet.

6. (currently amended) A fuel cell comprising:

a fuel cell unit including an anode electrode, a cathode electrode, and an electrolyte interposed between said anode electrode and said cathode electrode; and

metal separators for supporting said fuel cell unit interposed therebetween, said fuel cell further including:

communication holes forming a manifold penetrating through said separator, ~~for~~said manifold allowing a fuel gas or an oxygen-containing gas to flow therethrough;

at least one gas flow passage provided on an electrode power-generating surface of said metal separator, for supplying said fuel gas or said oxygen-containing gas to said anode electrode or said cathode electrode; and

at least one connecting flow passage penetrating through said metal separator, said connecting flow passage being different than said manifold, said connecting flow passage connecting said communication hole on a surface opposite to said electrode power-generating surface and said gas flow passage on said electrode power-generating surface.

7. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 6, wherein said connecting flow passage includes

flow channels connected to said communication hole on said surface opposite to said electrode power-generating surface; and at least one through-hole penetrating through said metal separator, said through-holes connecting said flow channels and said gas flow passage.

8. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 7, further comprising a buffer surrounding said communication hole and said through-hole,

wherein said through-hole is provided on an even surface of said metal separator.

9. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 8, wherein a guide is provided in said buffer.

10. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 9, wherein said guide is a seal formed integrally with said metal separator.

11. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 7, wherein said through-hole comprises a plurality of through-holes.

12. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 11, wherein a plurality of guides are formed integrally with a surface of said metal separator, said guides each extending from said communication hole toward a position between said through-holes.

13. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 6, wherein said fuel cell has a rectangular shape, and said communication holes are provided at upper, central, and lower portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell.

14. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 13, wherein said gas flow passage is a serpentine passage;

said communication holes provided at said upper portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell are a fuel gas inlet and a fuel gas outlet, and said communication holes provided at said lower portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell are an oxygen-containing gas inlet and an oxygen-containing gas outlet; and

said fuel gas inlet and said fuel gas outlet are provided at diagonally opposite positions, and said oxygen-containing gas inlet and said oxygen-containing gas outlet are provided at diagonally opposite positions.

15. (original) The fuel cell according to claim 14, wherein said communication holes provided at said central portions on both sides in the lateral direction of said fuel cell are a cooling medium inlet and a cooling medium outlet.